Department of State

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INCOMING TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01 SAN SA 05330 01 OF 02 151713Z 6843

SAN SA 05330 01 OF 02 151713Z

ACTION ARA-16

INFO	OCT-01	ADS-00	AID-07	INR-10	EUR-12	SS-15	CIAE-00
	DODE-00	H-01	IO-15	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-06
	PM-09	PA-01	INRE-00	SAL-01	ICAE-00	SP-02	SPRS-02
	/098 W						

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O R 141535Z JUL 81
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4691
INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
HULPALJ/USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PAN/INTAFF

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 SAN SALVADOR 5330

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PINT, SHUM, ES
SUBJECT: HOMILY FOR JULY 12

1. (U) SUMMARY: IN HIS HOMILY FOR JULY 12, BISHOP RIVERA Y DAMAS DENOUNCED THE MILITARY FOR AN INCIDENT INVOLVING CLERICS IN CHALATENANGO, AND EXPRESSED HIS GRATITUDE FOR THE WORK OF THE MARYKNOLLS HERE. HE WENT ON TO OUTLINE AND CONDEMN SOME 131 "REPRESSIVE" MURDERS AND TWO MASSACRES -- ONE ON THE METAYATE RIVER IN CHALATENANGO AND ONE AT MATILAPA -- AND CONCLUDED WITH AN APPEAL FOR THE RELEASE OF A LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS DETAINED BY THE AUTHORITIES. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR ARTURO RIVERA Y DAMAS DELIVERED THE HOMILY FOR JULY 12 AT SAN SALVADOR'S METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL. SOME OF HIS REMARKS FOLLOW.

3. (U) RIVERA BEGAN THE SOCIAL COMMENTARY SECTION OF THE HOMILY WITH THE DENUNCIATION OF AN INCIDENT BETWEEN CHURCH OFFICIALS AND SECURITY FORCES IN THE CITY OF CHALATENANGO. RIVERA SPOKE OF THE RUDE TREATMENT RECEIVED BY PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS OF THE TO (#)
AT THE HANDS OF SOME MILITARY THERE.
CLAIMING THAT THE TENSION OF THE CURRENT SITUATION IN NO WAY JUSTIFIED THE INCIDENT, RIVERA CALLED FOR A GOVERNMENTAL INVESTIGATION AND A DIRECTIVE THAT PLACES OF WORSHIP AND THEIR KEEPERS BE RESPECTED. HE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD MAKE A VISIT THAT DAY TO CHALATENANGO, DECLARED HIS INTENTION TO NAME A SUPERVISOR OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY THERE, AND AGAIN CALLED FOR "THE PROTECTION AND LIBERTY NECESSARY FOR PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL WORK."

4. RIVERA THEN SPOKE OF THE GREAT EFFORTS OF THE CLERGY AND THE GREATER DIFFICULTIES UNDER WHICH THEY WORK. HE REGRETTED THE "REPEATED AND UNJUST CRITICISMS" LEVELED AGAINST PRIESTS, PARTICULARLY THE MARYKNOLLS, AND WENT ON TO "EXPRESS MY THANKS FOR THE WORK OF THE MARYKNOLLS IN EL SALVADOR." HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT THE CLERGY SHOULD ABIDE BY THE MEDELLIN AND PUEBLA DECLARATIONS OF THE CHURCH REGARDING POLITICAL ACTIVITY.

5. (U) BY FAR THE LENGTHIEST PART OF THE SERMON DEALT WITH DETAINEES AND THE DEAD. AFTER REQUESTING THE LIBERATION OF A LONG LIST OF DETAINEES, RIVERA CATALOGUED THE MURDERS OF THE WEEK, COUNTING 131 DEATHS OF A "REPRESSIVE CHARACTER", INCLUDING SOME UNIONISTS. TWENTY-SEVEN OF THESE WERE OF PEOPLE ABDUCTED AFTER CURFEW. (SEE BELOW.) HE SINGLED OUT THE SLAYING OF BEJAMIN MEJIA (COVERED SEPTEL) AND CONDEMNED TWO MASSACRES, ONE OF 28 CAMPESINOS IN CHALATENANGO (SEPTEL) AND THE SECOND OF 8 YOUTHS ON A HACIENDA. HE NOTED THAT SEVENTY-SIX INDIVIDUALS MURDERS WERE CHARACTERIZED BY MARKS OF TORTURE. RIVERA DECLARED THAT MURDER "VIOLATES THE RIGHT OF EACH MAN TO PRESERVE HIS LIFE" AND THAT "GOD IS THE RULER OF LIFE AND ONLY HE MAY GIVE OR TAKE IT." "THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT," HE CONCLUDED, "OUGHT TO BE RESPECTED BY ALL."

6. (U) RIVERA Y DAMAS CONCLUDED WITH A LONG LIST OF PEOPLE APPREHENDED BY THE SECURITY SERVICES, ASKING FOR THEIR RELEASE --ADDING AT THE END TWO NAMES OF PROMINENT CITIZENS COMMONLY BELIEVED TO BE ABDUCTION VICTIMS OF THE LEFT.

7. (LOU) COMMENT: WE HAVE BECOME AWARE OF REPORTS OF THIS HOMILY IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST WHICH AMPLIFY ITS CONTENT. IN ONE INSTANCE, THE TIMES ARTICLE STATES THAT RIVERA DESCRIBED THE CHALATENANGO INCIDENT AS AN EVICTION OF PRIESTS AND NUNS FROM CHURCHES AND CONVENTS SEVERAL WEEKS AGO. A CHECK WITH THE TIMES' REPORTER HERE TOLD US THAT THE DESCRIPTION HAD ACTUALLY BEEN GIVEN HIM IN A BRIEF CONVERSATION AFTER THE SERMON, A FAIRLY COMMON PRACTICE OF RIVERA Y DAMAS, BUT ONE WHICH HAS CREATED DISPARITIES BETWEEN THE RECORDED TEXT AND THE PUBLISHED ACCOUNT OF OTHER SERMONS. AS RECORDED, RIVERA DESCRIBED THE INCIDENT AS FOLLOWS: "AS A PASTOR, I WISH TO CONDEMN THE FOLLOWING: THE RUDE TREATMENT RECEIVED BY THE PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS THAT PASTORALLY ATTEND THE PARISH OF CHALATENANGO AT THE HANDS OF THE MILITARY BASES THAT GUARD THAT TOWN. I WOULD LIKE TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEIR ATTITUDES ARE EXPLAINED BY THE NERVOUSNESS AND HERITAGE THAT IMPEDES THE COUNTRY. BUT IN NO WAY CAN THEY BE JUSTIFIED OR DISREGARD RESPECT FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP, RESPECT FOR THE PASTOR WHO MUST WATCH OVER THE CONSERVATION OF THESE PLACES, AND THE RIGHT OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOME OF THE FAITHFUL."

NOTE BY OC/T: (#) AS RECEIVED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR JUL 1982
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ENDORSE EXEMPTIONS NEEDED
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